

Restaurant Menus

This project will be a challenge, but it does target your water safety message and it is effective. Naturally, you will want to try this technique with the restaurants around the lake, first.

Probably the best lake restaurants to start will be the ones on the marina/docks or next to them. Then, try the eateries on the lake's periphery.

Are you ready to eat and "sell" the water safety campaign? Here goes. While you are making your normal dock visits, check the restaurant's menus. If they are battered or worn, with many price changes, you may be in luck. After the meal, meet with the boss in private. Do not come directly out with your request. First, briefly tell the person how you are increasing water safety awareness on the lake and provide the person a few ways you are doing it. A good time to approach the person, like before, is after an accident or fatality on the lake. Talk about the accident, and then you are ready to "pop" the question. Hand one of the worst looking menus to the boss and ask, ever so nicely, when he/she plans to print a new menu. Then pause. Tell the person you would like to get at least one on the next menu, somewhere.

Some of the smaller restaurants print them every six months or so. The Hurricane Restaurant, Center Hill Lake, near Buffalo Valley, Tennessee, printed the Freddie slick on the front cover, with the word "Hurricane" atop the artwork. This will be rare, but remember, restaurant operators are always looking for novel ideas and you have one ready for them.

It may be the chief chef will only give you space about the size of a silver dollar on the back page. Wonderful! That's more space than you have now. The life jacket slick is great for that size.

Don't forget to obtain extra menus when they are printed. Use them to help others and also carry one with you to the next restaurant boss. You could add the "sample" technique to your restaurant repertoire. This will make your "selling" task much, much simpler with a local lake sampler.

After the menu appears on the table, think publicity. Maybe get the local newspaper reporter to shoot a photo and write a short sidebar story during the next lake visit. It will be especially appropriate if the reporter is writing an overall water safety campaign article.

Another approach is, if the reporter is writing a negative article about all the boating accidents, fatalities and drownings on your lake, this is one of many "show me" approaches to get your water safety campaign out to the public. Sometimes it will even balance out an adverse story. It might even change the headline or the lead in your favor and then the reporter might use the lake problems as background, down in the story.

Have you had lunch today? Grab your pen, paper and slicks. Then, put on your water safety "thinking cap" and head for "Restaurant Number One" - the one with the frayed menus!

Good luck with the menu.